

**Testimony  
Dennis Waz  
Public Utilities Superintendent, City of Meriden  
Before the  
Finance Committee  
March 13, 2014**

**SB-29, AN ACT AUTHORIZING AND ADJUSTING BONDS OF THE STATE FOR  
CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS, TRANSPORTATION AND OTHER PURPOSES**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment regarding the Governor's proposed bond package. The Bond package maintains funding for the state's Clean Water Fund which demonstrates the Governor's commitment to assisting municipalities in meeting the state's environmental goals.

The Clean Water Fund has been instrumental in helping to fund projects to comply with nutrient removal (nitrogen and phosphorus) and other environmental standards.

The City of Meriden is in the process of negotiating permit language with the state Department of Energy & Environmental Protection (DEEP) relative to phosphorus reduction, and the City anticipates that it will be necessary to invest an additional \$13 million to upgrade the Water Pollution Control Facility and add approximately \$600,000 to the annual operating budget to meet phosphorus reduction goals. This places a considerable burden on residents and businesses during very challenging economic times.

This is particularly troubling for our residents because we may not be eligible for Clean Water Funds based on the point system used by DEEP because we have already received funding for phosphorus reduction. In 2008 when the City of Meriden was upgrading its wastewater treatment plant we were advised to upgrade to the 0.7 mg/l phosphorus limit, which we did.

Unfortunately, after the upgrade was completed, Meriden staff, as well as representatives from other plants on the Quinnipiac and Naugatuck Rivers, were invited to the DEEP office and advised that the EPA did not accept the state's program for phosphorus removal and DEEP therefore developed a new "interim" strategy for phosphorus removal which lowered Meriden's limit from 0.7 to 0.1mg/l.

Given the enormous compliance costs associated with achieving phosphorus limits set by the state, we urge lawmakers to support **efforts to increase the reimbursement level for phosphorus reduction projects from 30% to 50%, as called for in HB-5081 before the Finance Committee, and also ensure that cities like Meriden that have been subject to ongoing plant upgrades will be eligible for Clean Water Funds under the point system DEEP utilizes to award such grants.**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this priority issue.